

**Decisive Points in Stability and Support Operations:
Current U.S. Army Doctrine Continues to Support the
Tactical Commander**

A MONOGRAPH
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ABSTRACT

DECISIVE POINTS IN STABILITY AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS: CURRENT U.S. ARMY DOCTRINE CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE TACTICAL COMMANDER by MAJ Frank Zachar, USA, IN, 63 pages.

Since 1989, the US Army has taken part in many operations that are something other than war. Peacekeeping or Stability and Support Operations (SASO) have abounded for U.S. Army forces. In each operation, tactical commanders used U.S. Army doctrine to include the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) to provide a framework to forces available to achieve the desired endstate. Doctrine and the MDMP require that commanders determine decisive points to be leveraged by the use of force to degrade the enemy's center of gravity. The decisive points as used in tactical doctrine are rich in conventional battlefield overtones. The problem set or operational design varies considerably between an operation on a conventional battlefield and that of Stability and Support Operations.

This monograph analyzes U.S. Army doctrine in relation to the decisive point to determine whether the doctrinal decisive point continues to support the tactical commander involved in SASO. Beginning with an introduction to the theoretical problem, this monograph presents the decisive point and its relationship to operational design. The ingredients of operational design are decisive points, centers of gravity, and culmination. Each ingredient relates to one another in the context of operational design. This paper analyzes decisive points by reviewing the genesis of decisive points from theory, developed by such as authors as Clausewitz, Jomini, and Schneider. The current doctrinal references to decisive point are compiled, compared to their theoretical beginnings and examined in terms of clarity towards supporting tactical commanders in non-conventional settings such as SASO.

With the theoretical backdrop of decisive points available, this monograph examined the actual historical information about decisive points identified by commanders during Stability and Support Operations in Bosnia. Information about decisive points and operational methods analyzed in relation to time and operational design. Finally, analyzed historical decisive points identified as relevant to U.S. Army Stability and Support Operations in Bosnia were applied to the identified characteristics and developmental processes pertaining to decisive points as described by U.S military doctrine.

This study concluded that the U.S. Army's doctrinal characterization of decisive points supports the tactical commanders involved in SASO only when the commander has a solid grasp of operational art. Decisive points in SASO did not fit neatly into the doctrinal definition but by applying operational art, decisive points could be extrapolated. Operational art involves creating tactical objectives to achieve a desired strategic endstate. Understanding the operational design of the SASO environment is critical for the tactical commander to determine decisive points. An increased emphasis on training tactical commanders in operational art decreases the challenges facing the tactical commander by supporting his ability to determine the decisive point and focusing his main efforts.

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I. Introduction

If you have a task of moving a boulder, you can put your shoulder against the stone and strain to overcome its massive inertia, or you can survey the scene to find the opening that might let you exert a small amount of pressure to shift the center of gravity and topple the boulder. The search for leverage points is about finding those openings and making them work. We also want to find our vulnerabilities, the easy ways our plans can collapse, so that we can take steps to prevent the difficulty.¹

Background

Since 1989, the U.S. Army has taken part in many operations that are something other than war. Peacekeeping or Stability and Support Operations (SASO) have abounded for U.S. Army forces in places such as Rwanda, Haiti, Bosnia, Somalia, and Kosovo. The lack of a peer competitor or significant enemy such as the role filled by the former Soviet Union before its dissolution lends credos to the probability that the near future will hold an abundance of such missions for U.S. Army forces. The change of mission type for U.S. Army involvement belies a thorough evaluation of current doctrine in support of guiding the tactical commander to the decisive points on the SASO battlefield.

The SASO environment challenges the tactical commander in ways that the conventional battlefield rarely did. It is not unremarkable for a tactical commander, on a daily basis, to face the possibility of creating operational or strategic effects using only the tactical means at his disposal. The commander operates in the SASO environment armed only with the trained forces he has on hand. Doctrine provides necessary guidance to the commanders and the soldiers in their units. At the tactical level, doctrine is easily seen as more prescriptive than doctrine directed towards commands affecting the operational and strategic levels. The main purpose of this paper is to delve into the

possible dissonance between the doctrinal decisive point (DP) and the actual DPs prevalent in SASO missions from the perspective of the tactical commander.

This monograph inquires into the U.S. Army's doctrinal characterization of the decisive point to answer the following research question: Are decisive points as defined and characterized by U.S. Army doctrine applicable to the problems facing tactical commanders involved in Stability and Support Operations? It uses the following methodology to answer this question. First, a thorough collation of definitions and concepts of the decisive point is reviewed with discussion of its evolution from theory to doctrine and the relationship of the decisive point to operational design. Next, the actual historical information about decisive points identified by commanders during Stability and Support Operations in Bosnia is compiled and analyzed in relation to time and operational design. Finally, analyzed historical decisive points identified as relevant to U.S. Army Stability and Support Operations in Bosnia is applied to the identified characteristics and developmental processes pertaining to decisive points as described by U.S. military doctrine.

II. The Decisive Point – Theory, Operational Design and Doctrine

In order for the tactical commander to not be overwhelmed while planning for and directing troops within the complexity of the conventional battlefield, the U.S. Army ensures that commanders are indoctrinated with the Army's problem solving tool, the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). In each operation, tactical commanders have used the Military Decision Making Process to provide a framework for planning to direct an organization in hopes of eventually achieving a desired endstate. The MDMP

requires that tactical commanders determine the decisive point, a point "where the unit will mass the effects of overwhelming combat power to achieve a result with respect to terrain, enemy, and time that will accomplish the unit's purpose."²

The massing of effects of overwhelming combat power rings true when dealing strictly in the Clausewitzian paradigm of conventionality, where "The military power must be destroyed, that is, reduced to such a state as not able to prosecute the war."³ At the conclusion of the Cold War, General Gordon R. Sullivan recognized the need for the U.S. Army to rethink its approach to the application of force. He recognized that the SASO environment would be an environment "dominated by nonmilitary considerations."⁴ Nonmilitary considerations create a new complexity in operations, in turn directly affecting the decisive points where massing of military and nonmilitary measures create superior results. However, to determine what results are actually being sought, the commander must be trained to identify the operational design of the battlefield.

What is Operational Design?

Operational design is key in linking activities throughout all levels of war from tactical through operational to strategic, in such a fashion to ensure the most precious resource, the soldier, is not wasted in a vulgar display of misdirected action. The development of operational design requires an understanding of operational art and the conceptual tools with which the operational artist works. Lastly, the commander analyzes reality to determine the direction that provides the greatest opportunity for success.

To derive the operational design, commanders must understand and be proficient in operational art. The operational artist skillfully blends the necessary ingredients of

conceptual tools to provide a plan that links ends, ways and means on the battlefield. The ends relate to the aim, the ways translate as methods, and the means are the physical and cognitive tools at the commander's disposal. The blended result is a design that places emphasis on significant concepts of operational design such as centers of gravity, lines of operation, decisive points, and culmination. When commanders at all levels understand the operational design and its inherent elements, the directed actions of plans and events at all levels are more likely to support synergistically the accomplishment of the strategic objectives.

Operational art is not restricted to any level of war. The tactical commander should focus on understanding the operational design of his battlefield environment, for it is the cumulative effects of tactical victories that achieve operational and even strategic results. Operational design is described in *Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations* as the product of linking and integrating the "tactical battles and engagements that, when fought and won, achieve strategic aim."⁵ Clausewitz wrote earlier, "The [tactical] engagement is...in itself of no value; its significance lies in [its positive effect on] the [operational and strategic] outcome."⁶ The proficiency of operational art determines the success of translation of overall strategy to campaigns, operations, battles, and engagements.

Decisive points are only one of many conceptual tools that assist in operational design. *FM 100-5, Operations*, lists center of gravity, lines of operations, decisive points, and culmination as the main tools of operational design.⁷ The most important concept is the concept of center of gravity. "The essence of operational art lies in being able to mass effects against the enemy's main source of power--his center of gravity, which he seeks

to protect.”⁸ The center of gravity, first conceptualized by Clausewitz, is defined in the U.S. Army using his words:

The center of gravity is the hub of all power and movement upon which everything depends. It is that characteristic, capability, or location from which enemy and friendly forces derive their freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight.”⁹

The identification of the center of gravity normally requires the commander to understand how the enemy organizes, fights, makes decisions, and deals with inherent internal weaknesses.¹⁰ Each tactical commander attempts to safeguard the cohesiveness of his own center of gravity, while attempting to disrupt the enemy’s center of gravity. Failure to locate and attack directly or indirectly the enemy’s center of gravity leaves the enemy in a position to threaten the achievement of one’s own tactical purpose.

The operational design varies considerably between an operation on the conventional battlefield and the unconventionality of the SASO battlefield. The operational design of the conventional battlefield is one the commander has been preparing for his entire career. “Major General William Nash, 1st Armored Division commander, remarked that he had trained for 30 years to read the ‘battlefield.’ The Implementation Force (IFOR) mission in Bosnia required him to read a ‘peace field.’ The result was unbalancing.”¹¹

The tactical commander understands that the artful directing of forces, or means, is key to creating the desired effects, or ends. It is by distinguishing first the desired strategic ends that provide the foundation for operational means directed in operations that govern the tactical approaches of tactical commanders. The operational intent and endstate, provided by the higher headquarters, is key in determining whether the summation of tactical ways are in fact supporting the necessary operational effects. The tactical ways

must have direction if they are to attack the threat's center of gravity, and the intended direction should be towards the decisive point or points.

Theory to Doctrine

The decisive point is not a modern term. Both Clausewitz and Jomini, who witnessed the birth of modern warfare following the time of Napoleon Bonaparte, wrote about a decisive point.¹² From their writings, it is easy to see that they placed a considerable amount of emphasis on actions at the decisive point. Clausewitz wrote "the best strategy is always to be very strong; first in general, and then at the decisive point."¹³ Jomini added that the possession of the decisive point more than anything else enables the freedom to continue to use the principles of war and a final victory.¹⁴ As Clausewitz and Jomini continued to espouse the importance of the decisive point, they were inclined to quantify and give detailed specifics about what constitutes a decisive point.

For both Clausewitz and Jomini, determining the decisive point was not a simple task. Each of them attempted in their own way to characterize decisive points. Jomini used more detail to describe the decisive point and in prescriptive fashion provided a list as to how DPs can be determined. Clausewitz focused his readers around the problems of appraising the decisive point with the purpose of creating a more favorable disposition with respect to the enemy. Both struggled with two important features of the decisive point: 1) the complexity of the decisive point in relation to the battlefield and 2), the relation of the decisive point to the decisive battle. Only Clausewitz espoused the theory that decisive points have direct linkage to the center of gravity.

Jomini wrote that a decisive point is either a feature on the ground, a position occupied by the enemy forces, or a terrain feature along the route of march that is necessary to retain to reach the strategic aim. With a terrain-oriented decisive point, Jomini stressed the importance of the "topographical and strategic descriptions of the theater of war."¹⁵ To set the conditions for determining decisive points, the U.S. Army possesses a process known as the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB), and staff estimates. This process of IPB and estimate formulation parallels what Jomini meant when he wrote that the decisive points are determined for the "entire length of the frontier or throughout the country."¹⁶ With the decisive points identified, the commander can create combinations of decisive points in some sequence to determine the direction of the operation.¹⁷ The operational direction, coupled with the commitment of arranged masses thrown at the enemy or at a point "at the proper times and with ample energy," fosters a proper campaign leading to final victory.¹⁸

Clausewitz did not attempt to quantify the decisive point as Jomini did, but attempted to use it to demonstrate that the identification of decisive points required an artful mastering of the concepts of war. "Suitable planning from the start," according to Clausewitz, was imperative if the commander was to retain the bulk of his forces in the face of many "nonessentials," thereby ensuring that strength was the overwhelming characteristic at the decisive point.¹⁹ The decisive points in Clausewitz's writings contained another characteristic not present in Jomini's theorems. He wrote that the decisive point could actually be a moment in time. The decisive moment could be when the object of a force's desire was actually gained or lost, whether it be an enemy force or piece of important terrain.²⁰ It was the ends Clausewitz referred to as being key to the

decisive moment. The rubric of his argument was the commander's challenge of matching means to ends. "Bonaparte was quite right when he said that Newton himself would quail before the algebraic problems it could pose."²¹

Both Jomini and Clausewitz agreed that the art of war meant matching means with ends in a fashion that involved the decisive point. Jomini believed the art involved massing at a locale or point along the proper line of operations. Clausewitz, in *On War*, could not allow the art of war to be described as simply a process of matching ends with means. In his writings, he emphasized fog, friction, genius, and the constant tug of war of the trinity, to relay that the problem of matching of ends with means created an incalculable problem. He stressed a cognitive tension that pervades in matters of warfare. He characterized the cognitive tension as the need for an artful conduct of war by commanders and a need for a point where "intellectual activity leaves the field of the exact sciences of logic and mathematics." He went further to say:

It then becomes an art in the broadest meaning of the term the faculty of using judgement to detect the most important and decisive elements in the vast array of facts and situations. Undoubtedly this power of judgement consists to a greater or lesser degree in the intuitive comparison of all the factors and attendant circumstances; what is remote and secondary is at once dismissed while the most pressing and important points are identified with greater speed than could be done by strictly logical deduction.²²

The art of correctly appraising the situation and making a decision to match means with ends by use of decisive points "where the severest blow to the enemy can be given" is still at the heart of matters concerning modern tactical commanders.²³

The goal of the modern commander, operating at any level of war, has not significantly changed since the times of Jomini. With the knowledge that tactical victories should lead to the success of operations geared towards the strategic aim, the need to focus means

towards the accomplishment of a particular mission while producing the most advantageous outcome still pervades.

However, the environment surrounding the modern commander has changed from the time of Clausewitz and Jomini in terms of complexity. The modern tactical commander finds himself operating in environments that vary considerably in complexity depending on the situation and mission. The size and complexity of the commander's means, to include his unit, initially adds to the complexity of the environment. Conventional ways normally used on the conventional battlefield have little place in the arena of peacekeeping. The problems associated with the fact that traditional means matched with conventional ways do not provide the desired ends on unconventional battlefields, creates the majority of cognitive tension for the commander at the tactical level. To focus conventional means, the commander at the tactical level finds it necessary to provide more detailed synchronization and integration of military and non-military forces. He must also seek a firmer understanding of the operational objectives leading to the strategic aim.

Clausewitz emphasized that the tactical commander plays a significant role in the conduct of the engagement and is not free of the cognitive tension relating to the artful employment of forces. The engagement is the tactical commander's contribution to the operational and strategic aims. In fact, each action by the tactical commander should have "a specific purpose relating to the whole [the political object and strategic aim]."²⁴ The tactical commander must make the proper decision as to how to direct his forces into an engagement with the proper purpose in mind.

The mission of the commander is to make the right decision in all types of environments. Whether the environment is significantly more complex or not, what Helmut Graf von Moltke, Chief of the Prussian General Staff from 1857 to 1871, said still rings true. "It is an error to concentrate one's strength without an entirely definite purpose and anywhere other than a decisive place."²⁵ It would be an error as well to not locate the decisive place and squander the energy of one's forces in a distributed manner. The tension for the commander is to determine the purpose and the decisive point. In order to have tactical commanders make the best decisions possible, a proven decision process is necessary.

To aid the tactical commander, the U.S. Army created a "single, established, and proven analytical process" called the Military Decision-Making Process to support the commander's conduct of problem solving.²⁶ "The MDMP helps the commander and his staff examine a battlefield situation and reach logical decisions."²⁷ The decision itself imparts the commander's vision of an end-state in the form of a plan or estimate. In the process of determining the best plan, the MDMP guides the commander and staff to highlight critical aspects of the operation.

Critical aspects of the operation are another way of describing decisive points. In the Course of Action Development portion of the MDMP, the commander and staff are charged with determining possible decisive points. *FM 101-5, Staff Organization and Operations*, describes the decisive point as the focus of the main effort. It is "where the unit will mass the effects of overwhelming combat power to achieve a result with respect to terrain, enemy, and time that will accomplish the unit's purpose."²⁸ The commander integrates, coordinates, and synchronizes the means within his command at "the point

where an enemy weakness allows maximum combat power to be applied, leading to mission accomplishment.”²⁹ There should be little doubt as to the importance of these decisive points if they require the maximum effort in thought and tangible means, as described by Clausewitz and Jomini, and reiterated in U.S. Army doctrine.

By reading the following, one finds that the decisive point, as defined and used in modern U.S. Army doctrine, is the very same definition Clausewitz and Jomini generated in their actual theories. The U.S. Army’s definition from *FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics*, reads:

1. A point, if retained, that provides a commander with a marked advantage over his opponent. Decisive points are usually **geographic in nature but could include other physical elements, such as enemy formations, command posts, and communication nodes.**
2. A **time or location where enemy weakness is positioned** that allows overwhelming combat power to be generated against it. It could be **an enemy weakness to be exploited or a time when the combat potential of the enemy force is degraded.**
3. Conveys to subordinates **a potential point of decision** that the commander has identified through his estimate process to apply overwhelming combat power [emphasis added].³⁰

With the prevalence of phrases such as geographic in nature, enemy formations, command posts and a place to apply overwhelming combat power, it is easy to spot the parallels in Army doctrine and their theoretical beginnings.

The Army’s doctrinal definition of the decisive point is suspect in three ways: (1) it is copied nearly verbatim from 19th Century theory, when operational art had not yet been considered, (2) it has considerable conventional overtones alluding to the concept of a decisive battle, and (3) it is heavy on examples with no clear indication of how to determine the actual decisive point. The absence of the decisive point’s relationship to operational design leaves the definition impotent. The tactical commander using this

definition alone would fail to grasp the real purpose of the DP. Its purpose is to support the operational objective as it relates to nested concepts of operational design.

For a commander to have a firm understanding of an operational objective the commander must have a strong understanding of the operational design of the battlefield. The operational design encompasses the operational layer, whereby the use of operational art - knowledge of ends, means, and ways - support the interpretation of the operational level of war. A correct interpretation of the operational level of war in turn sets the stage for determining the center of gravity of the enemy. The tactical commander, on average, cannot easily address the enemy's center of gravity, "the hub of all power and movement." If it could be addressed, the tactical commander would most likely find it too powerful an entity to be subdued with the means available at his level. To disrupt the enemy's center of gravity, leverage points are the best tools. The leverage points connote decisive points. The determination of the exact leverage points can be a daunting task for the tactical commander. As Martin Van Creveld wrote in *Command in War*, "The best system of command, to caricature Clausewitz's famous dictum on strategy, is always to have a genius in charge, first in general and then at the decisive point."³¹

The ideals of the decisive point are evolving, but that evolution has largely gone unnoticed in modern U.S. Army doctrine. There remains little doubt that the complexity of the battlefield and the missions of the modern day U.S. Army have changed dramatically since the middle of the 19th century. As the evolution of military thought embraces the ideals purported by the systems and complexity theorists, it is becoming popular to consider modern thinker's renditions of decisive points. New methods of dealing with systems may provide insights for commanders in terms of how leverage

points affect complex systems and environments such as modern wars and peacekeeping operations.

III. Bosnia - Historical Background

U.S. Army forces deployed to Bosnia in December 1995 following the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. For years before the entry of American forces into Bosnia-Herzegovina (B-H), the warring factions in the region had fought one another. The reasons for fighting and many of the issues surrounding the combatants are not significant to the scope of this monograph. This monograph did focus on the interaction between the U.S. forces and various Entities in B-H. Since 1995, U.S. operations within the area of operations went through evolutions in both mission and name. Operational objectives were completely changed or modified to meet the changing environment. This section will describe the environment, its evolutions of change, and the ramifications the actions of the U.S. forces ensuring the peace.

When the Former Warring Factions (FWF) signed the Dayton Accord the average commander could not conceive of the complexities that would exist within the borders of B-H. The FWFs signed the Dayton Accord agreeing to cease fighting and allow NATO forces entry into B-H to begin peace and stability operations. The years of fighting had left the landscape scarred with gutted and empty homes, broken roads, fields of mines, and left a people filled with animosity and hatred towards each other. A government in shambles was trying to jump-start a broken economy whose agrarian system was virtually stopped.³² The people themselves had been dislocated from their villages by the fighting and now the agreement itself had created boundaries that would make returning for many

nearly impossible. Non-government organizations abounded and each had progressed to a different level of involvement or support within the communities.

The United States committed the 1st Armored Division as the nucleus of the Multinational Division North, one of three multinational divisions that comprised the Implementation Force (IFOR). The NATO Allied Ready Reaction Corps (ARRC) commanded all NATO troops in B-H. The operation was given the name Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Task Force (TF) EAGLE was the operational name for those forces comprising the American forces serving alongside the other multinational divisions. Since its inception, the onus of being TF EAGLE has rotated between different U.S. divisions and has seen numerous different commanders at all levels. At the successful completion of the implementation objectives and elections, many policy makers influencing the region believed "a reduced military presence was [still] needed to provide the stability necessary for consolidating the peace."³³ In December of 1996, IFOR became the Stability Force, SFOR. The operation name changed from Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR to Operation JOINT GUARD.

The objectives that IFOR trained for, engaged in, and accomplished were directly related to implementing an agreed upon peaceful conclusion to the war. Its primary tasks were listed in the General Framework for Agreement of Peace (GFAP), as part of the Dayton Accords. The tenets of the GFAP were military in nature and relatively understandable to most tactical commanders operating in the region. Those operations consisted of: maintaining the cessation of hostilities, separating the armed forces of the Bosnian-Croat Entity (the Federation) and the Bosnian Serb Entity (the Republika Srpska), transferring areas between the two Entities, and finally, moving the Parties'

forces and heavy weapons into approved sites. Task Force EAGLE's actual mission statement read "On order, TF EAGLE occupies SECTOR TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and conducts peace enforcement operation to complete compliance with the peace accord; ensures force protection."³⁴ By reading TF EAGLE's actual mission statement, it is clear that in the early stages of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, commanders were dealing with more conventional roles in terms of military operations. The operational design conceived in the early phases of the operation supported tactical commanders using the force inherent to their unit, whether by show or actual force, to accomplish tasks that dealt with lines of control in relation to FWFs. The IFOR eventually began engaging in operations to achieve objectives that were more complex in nature. The new objectives dealt with the civil aspects of the operation, such as supporting the implementation of peaceful elections and ensuring villages within the actual Zone of Separation (ZOS) were not taken over by only one entity. Refugee return during IFOR's tenure was mainly considered the responsibility of the civil agencies not yet fully deployed into theater. The creation of the ZOS added to the refugee problem. The ZOS separated the Federation from the Republic of Srpska. Some residents who sided with one faction over the other found themselves and or their homes on the wrong side of the ZOS. Dealing directly with the full complexity of the problem of refugee return eventually became the mission of the Stability Force, SFOR.

SFOR directed its attention to the specific tasks contributing to the stabilization of the secure environment IFOR had helped create. SFOR did this by preventing the resumption of hostilities, promoting peace and supporting civilian organizations as they attempted to rebuild the infrastructure, economy, and return the thousands of refugees.

SFOR continues to operate in Bosnia-Herzegovina at the time of this writing. Its size is significantly smaller, but its mission continues to be one of sheer complexity.

IV. Decisive Points in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The analysis portion of this monograph is broken into five phases. The first phase includes IFOR planning and entry into B-H, and the accomplishment of the military objectives. The second phase deals with a growing transition to stability operations oriented towards activities civil in nature. The third phase includes the final stages of IFOR when the military objectives are nearly complete and the focus of commander's intent had changed to supporting the elections, a part of the civil administration of the region. The fourth phase encompasses the time after the elections, when IFOR changed to SFOR. SFOR dealt mainly with objectives ensuring stability and were almost all civil in nature. The final section includes an analysis of the identified decisive points and their comparison to the current U.S. Army doctrinal definition of decisive points.

Phase 1-Entry

[The fundamental principle of war] on the battlefield, [is] to throw the mass of the forces upon the decisive point, or upon that portion of the hostile line which it is of the first importance to overthrow.³⁵

Planning for the deployment of U.S. Army forces into B-H began around March 1993 with a series of reconnaissance trips into the warring region.³⁶ In October of 1995, only two months prior to deployment, the actual units to be involved began certification training. Training focused on a handful of tasks such as: dealing with the media, command post exercises (CPXs), fire coordination exercises (FCXs), establishment of a

Zone of Separation (ZOS), and conduct of Joint Military Commissions (JMCs). The primary emphasis on training was force protection. The purpose of force protection was to ensure the safety of soldiers as they dealt with the separation of warring factions, the numerous mines, and the unknown. Below is the threat situation as it appeared in the initial TF EAGLE operation order.

Threat. This plan estimates that there will be general compliance by all factions in the short term. This general compliance will include some local non-compliance by "rogue" units (likely company size, but no larger than brigade) which choose to test NATO resolve or to try to hold local gains won during the war. Tensions will persist in previous areas of conflict, particularly those where fighting has recently concluded. The Zone of Separation and areas of transfer (between factions) will create displaced persons and refugees. This will pose a tremendous threat to stability operations, as the peace agreement stipulates that all displaced persons will be permitted to return home and repossess their property. Terrain and infrastructure considerations also vary from area to area, and will affect our ability to conduct peace enforcement operations. Additionally, existing institutions such as UNPROFOR and Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) will influence the region. The highest potential for threat to the implementation of the treaty, or to TF EAGLE forces, is in seven regions which pose particular challenges for us: TUZLA (CQ1533), ZENICA/KAKANJ (YK3200), TESANJ Finger (YK3744), DOBOJ Salient (BQ7058), POSAVINA Corridor (CQ4060-CQ0086), SAPNA Thumb (CQ4030), and KLADANJ (CQ1600). See Annex B (INTELLIGENCE).³⁷

The threat was isolated to regions as opposed to specific units of warring factions. The regions mentioned are places where the former warring factions had interests as a result of displaced civilians, freedom of movement, and lines of defense. Each area mentioned is a relatively large area, but no specific location within those areas is mentioned.

Analysis of the ARRC's mission and intent statement provides little indication of a center of gravity or decisive points. The purpose of the operation was to assume command of the area of operations and complete the military tasks as outlined in the Dayton Accords and listed in the GFAP. The commander of the ARRC (COMARRC), stressed in his mission and intent statement that the initial priority of the operation was

the Transfer of Authority (TOA), from the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) to the NATO forces and the subsequent withdrawal of UNCRO forces. Commanders were advised that tactical operations must be "sensitive to political, strategic, and operational level guidance and factors." Seizing the initiative was important and shaping operations using other than maneuver units, such as PSYOPS units and other specialized organizations. The inclusion of the phrase "key areas" within the intent statement indicates that the COMARRC considered some areas within the area of operations to be of greater importance. Force protection was still the overriding priority throughout the operation, indicating that the command understood their freedom of movement in country was essential towards mission accomplishment. The point of force protection was a major concern throughout the entire operation.³⁸

Like the ARRC, TF EAGLE did not provide a cohesive operational design to the subordinate commanders. There was no mention of a center of gravity for friendly or threat forces or subsequent decisive points. A shortsighted endstate was mentioned. Task Force EAGLE's objective simply was to conduct peace enforcement operations in support of the GFAP and ensure force protection.³⁹ The purpose was to "establish and maintain conditions in the AO (area of operations) that contributed to peace" by use of "disciplined, competent, and professional military force," to compel the factions to comply with the terms of the GFAP. Five major points listed in the commander's intent statement directed the attention of the subordinate commanders within TF EAGLE: proper display of discipline and strength, the Joint Military Commissions, contact with FWF, contact with NGOs to include UN Officials, force protection, and an endstate.

Task Force EAGLE deemed that the FWFs and the world would judge the Implementation Force by how well it provided force protection to itself. The TF EAGLE did not provide any indications within the operations order of decisive points that might be geographic or enemy units.⁴⁰

The tactical commander of TF EAGLE, then Major General Robert Nash, commander 1st Armored Division, determined that one area was the most important and he verbalized this to his subordinates. He and his subordinates considered the narrow corridor of land called the Posavina Corridor, separating the Serbs into two areas, the most important area.⁴¹ A great deal of fighting between entities occurred previously in this area and was a place where all FWF's lines of defense arrived at one tumultuous point. The ARRC did not expressly relate this corridor as a decisive or even critical piece of terrain.⁴²

Though TF EAGLE did not use decisive point vernacular in the actual TF EAGLE operations order, the term 'main effort', which was used repeatedly in the order, can be matched with what may have been decisive points. U.S. Army doctrine guides commanders to "apply overwhelming combat power" at the decisive point.⁴³ Doctrinally, the unit given the mission to act as the main effort of an operation is the force that is weighted in terms of ability to create effects more so than other units within the same command. The main effort's mission is in turn designed to achieve the desired effects that subsequently achieve the overall objective as identified by the higher headquarters.⁴⁴ In TF EAGLE's operation order, a main effort was determined and that main effort retained the majority of the combat power from the overall organization.⁴⁵ As a result of the commander and staff's hesitancy to use the term decisive point, this paper conceived that there were in fact decisive points determined by the commander.

Assuming that decisive points did exist, this paper deduced them by focusing on the actions of the main efforts. The decisive points were considered the focus of the main efforts.

The main effort changed four times as TF EAGLE gained entry into B-H. The first main effort was a small force that flew into B-H to conduct the TOA and initial JMC. Because of the limited breadth of the initial main effort, this monograph only briefly discusses it. The second main effort was the line of communications force crossing the Sava River; namely, an engineer led operation. The third main effort was the large maneuver forces that conducted link-up with the small initial main effort. The highly publicized crossing of the Sava River and the link-up were major operations considered completely tactical in nature, and not strictly considered relevant to the SASO focus of this paper. The fourth main effort was the force that moved to control the Posavina Corridor. The final main effort continued to be the main effort for the duration of operations that IFOR existed and deserves the majority of attention in this monograph.

The main force comprising the combat power of TF EAGLE, not including the initial main effort, could not immediately gain entry into the area of operations. Between the area of responsibility (AOR) of TF EAGLE and its Intermediate Staging Base (ISB), located in Croatia, was the Sava River. This natural obstacle created a situation that forced the commander of TF EAGLE to use less than conventional techniques to implement the initial priority of the COMARRC. The initial priority of the COMARRC, as stated earlier, was the TOA, from UNPROFOR to the NATO forces.

On G-Day, as the crossing of the Sava River was getting underway, the initial main effort flew deep into B-H. The force consisted of a battalion of Infantry, 3-325 Parachute

Infantry Regiment (PIR), and the TF EAGLE Command Post, TF EAGLE FORWARD. These forces landed at the TUZLA Airbase to coordinate with the UN forces and initiate the first JMC. A major concern of the TF EAGLE commander was that the factions would not adhere to the timeline set forth in the GFAP. The shortage of U.S. troop strength in the area never became an issue indicating that the forces at hand were applied at the decisive point. The compliant nature of the faction's withdrawal from vicinity the ZOS was a result of the well-orchestrated JMCs. An entire staff section was created to orchestrate and run the JMCs. According to Brigadier General Stan Cherrie, who ran the first unofficial JMC, the handling of JMCs "became a focal point for operations in Bosnia."⁴⁶ Considering the JMC as a decisive point was the first indication that in the SASO environment decisive points did not neatly match their doctrinal definition.

The fourth main effort was a force-oriented main effort as opposed to the less than conventional first main effort. The TF EAGLE operation order states "On order, 1BDE, as the TFE (Task Force Eagle) main effort, moves into sector to ensure east-west and north-south freedom of movement in the POSAVINA CORRIDOR, priority along ROUTE ARIZONA."⁴⁷ The vague on-order task did not pose any significant problems for the commander of the largest single force in theater, the Ready Force Combat Team (RFCT).

The commander of the RFCT, which was 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, recognized that his main mission was actualizing the five major points from the operation order of his higher headquarters. Colonel Gregory Fontenot was the RFCT commander. When asked if he considered the five points or the terrain that he was ordered to occupy to be decisive, he responded that in his mind, "Decisive could be attributed (to the points)

if you make a mistake in one of these places. You may not have known the place or event was decisive, but if you happen to make a mistake that did not allow you to achieve your objective-it was decisive." He said "an accident, a misrepresented JMC, an illumination round that kills a kid, or even the point in time when you make a poor decision could be a decisive point." His interpretation of a decisive point was instrumental to how he focused his unit on the mission at hand.

It is apparent from reading Colonel Fontenot's unit mission statement and his intent statement that his reactionary stance on decisive points permeated his initial actions in B-H.⁴⁸ Although he never used the word decisive point in his operation orders or in his daily vernacular, Colonel Fontenot considered three essential main points when determining how to deploy his brigade into B-H. First, he absolutely believed force protection was critical. Any failure in force protection would result in placing the mission in jeopardy. According to Fontenot, a force protection failure would have had tactical and strategic ramifications. Second, Fontenot considered the legitimacy of his force as it appeared to the FWF and civilians within the region. The treaty provided the legal legitimacy, but the handling of the GFAP and the perceived impartiality of his command would provide the necessary legitimacy. Lastly, in contending with the direct military objectives involving the FWF, he saw a "crunch point," a place where control of the ground in his sector hinged. This point was Brcko (pronounced Birchko), a small town occupied by civilians and soldiers from all FWFs. In reaction to this noted crunch point, he massed his forces as quickly as possible. He massed in three ways: by sending the largest concentration of forces there first, by ensuring the forces occupied terrain in the area that was controlled by all sides of the FWFs, and by personally conducting the

majority of the face to face meetings with leaders of the FWFs in the vicinity of the town. The show of force for possible reactionary activities was important, but to Colonel Fontenot, the mission ultimately depended on a more active role played by the FWF towards accomplishing the tenets of the GFAP.

Getting the FWFs to participate in the handling of their separation was the key to mission success, according to Colonel Fontenot. Speaking with the head of each faction and coaxing them into agreeing to develop their own plan for separation created a level of response that was greater than what could have transpired if only the maximum effort of U.S. forces alone were used. The RFCT actually drew up a plan for separation, but the plan created by the FWFs was suitable, acceptable, and implemented. Colonel Fontenot described the effectiveness of the plan by saying:

It worked so well, in a place that was supposed to be the most difficult to control, that we oversaw the destruction of almost every bunker all FWFs built totaling some 2,428 [bunkers]. Almost no other units [units within the ARRC operating in B-H] had even gotten a single bunker down."⁴⁹

The plan allowed for a much faster response time by the FWFs than expected. The early accomplishment of the tenets of the GFAP left the commander the opportunity to consider other necessary measures to ensure stability.

In relating the importance of any part of the RFCT's operations, Colonel Gregory Fontenot insisted that his command used neither the term decisive point nor centers of gravity to describe any part of the operation. According to Fontenot, both terms were never used because they were not supportive to the mission. Nevertheless, careful examination of the orders, knowledge of U.S. Army doctrine, and discussions with the RFCT commander himself left it apparent that there 'were' decisive points and they were considered in forming the methods of operation. These decisive points were: force

protection, legitimacy of U.S. forces, control of Brcko and the Posavina Corridor, and an active participation by the FWFs towards implementation of the peace accords.

Unfortunately, the lack of a discernable center of gravity at all levels of command makes it impossible to ascertain whether the command chose the correct decisive points, though all objectives were met. Four months later, with the military tasks of the operation nearly complete and yet little hope for future stability, he began creating a campaign plan that identified both friendly and FWF centers of gravity in hopes of creating a foreseeable stability.

Phase 2-Transition to Stability

Indeed, if the art of war consists in throwing the masses upon the decisive points, it is necessary to take the initiative.⁵⁰

Once initial entry operations and the subsequent objectives of enforcing the peace had been completed, the commanders in the theater began to reevaluate the operational design to determine where force could be applied to create long term stability. This section of the paper addresses the design the tactical commander of TF EAGLE's main effort evolved into operational objectives and used to attack the problem of stability. Success was difficult to measure with hard figures, but overall, the mission of IFOR was a success in achieving the stated military objectives and setting the groundwork for future peace in B-H.

The commander of the RFCT, Colonel Fontenot, was one of the first tactical commanders in the region to attempt to deal with identifying the operational design of IFOR's mission. He felt that the complexity of the environment that specifically surrounded the town of Brcko required a method not usually attempted at the tactical

level. He told his staff "this isn't a tactical thing-this is operational level, with theater strategic implications. We got to write us a campaign plan."⁵¹ To create the operational design, Fontenot and his staff drew up a concept paper that was issued in operations order format and entitled the order as *RFCT Peace Operations Campaign Plan*.

In his campaign plan, Fontenot highlighted nearly all the ingredients inherent to operational design including strategic and operational objectives given to him by higher headquarters, centers of gravity, and points where combat power could be focused to match up the desired endstates of IFOR and the FWFs. The campaign plan was well received by TF EAGLE as a cogent plan to be implemented. At higher levels, the plan was seen as mission creep as it involved conducting activities focused at decisive points that non-military and civil agencies, not yet in theater, were supposed to have begun. Fontenot had highlighted the same cognitive tension Clausewitz had written about, but one that was specific to SASO. The tension was created by a desire to match means to ends by use of non-traditional ways, whereby forces specifically attempted to affect non-doctrinal decisive points. Colonel Fontenot said that eventually the COMARRC submitted, but never truly understood that there were some approaches to mission accomplishment that were not prescribed by higher, but were essential to the strategic ends.⁵² To the commander of the RFCT, it was evident that his tactical unit could implement civil affairs (CA), counter-intelligence (CI) and information operations (INFO OPS) in a sequenced and synchronized manner that would provide operational and strategic successes.

To link tactical activities to strategic ends, Colonel Fontenot took the liberty of identifying the strategic and operational centers of gravity for the IFOR and the FWFs.

In his directions to subordinates, he made it expressly clear that the FWF's and the RFCT had centers of gravity that needed to be preserved in order to achieve a peaceful endstate. His concept of the centers of gravity for the threat, the FWFs, differed from what are traditionally considered as centers of gravity. At the strategic level, Fontenot believed the FWF's center of gravity was their perception of how well the implementation of the GFAP was being accomplished and its effects on the territorial integrity of the Bosnian State.⁵³ By definition, centers of gravity are the hub of all power and movement upon which everything depends. It is also that which gives friendly and enemy forces the freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight. In the traditional sense, U.S. Army doctrine portrays the need to mass effects against the threat's main source of power. Preserving or creating a center of gravity runs contrary to traditional methods of dealing with centers of gravity for military forces. This contrary approach involving centers of gravity subsequently affected the operational design at the operational and tactical levels in turn creating decisive points characteristically different from doctrine as well.

The campaign plan determined the ways in which the strategic centers of gravity for the FWFs could be affected at the operational and tactical level. Below are the ways Fontenot believed that the centers of gravity were manifested in the RFCT's area of operations.

Operational [centers of gravity]:

BiH (Bosniacs) - Territorial integrity of the Bosnian State as a single political entity. In particular, this equates to freedom of movement and the repossession of property for Bosniacs.

VRS (Serbians) - Territorial and political integrity, particularly their control of the Posavina Corridor and Brcko.

HVO (Croatians) - Territorial integrity of Odazk, Orasje, and Ravne Brcko.

Tactical [centers of gravity]:

BiH (Bosniacs) - Ability to defend key terrain in the AOR. (e.g., Heavy weapons positioning to quickly defend Gradacac and Brcko).

VRS (Serbians) - Ability to preserve the Posavina Corridor. (e.g., Heavy weapons positioning vicinity Brcko and Modrica to prevent sealing of the Posavina Corridor.)

HVO (Croatians) - Preservation of political/military control over Odzak and Orasje Pockets.⁵⁴

At the operational level, the campaign plan stated the FWF's strategic center of gravity was manifested in terms of the territorial and political integrity of the region as it relates to the desires of each faction. At the tactical level, the FWF's center of gravity was politically maintaining key terrain for defensive purposes. The key to success was building support for the accomplishment of the GFAP tenets and the security of all entities involved, to include NGO and U.S. military, with means that demonstrated that the handling of the provisions were not threatening the FWF's centers of gravity at any level.

At the tactical level, forces within the RFCT began by directing their focus towards preserving peace and stability by matching the RFCT's endstate with the COMARRC and COMEAGLE's (Commander, TF EAGLE) endstate.⁵⁵ The COMARRC and COMEAGLE endstates involved building a secure environment and setting the conditions for peace to take root in the region. The RFCT sought the habitual compliance by all FWF's in line with the terms set forth in the GFAP. All commands continued to stress the transfer of operations to follow on forces and a safe redeployment as the main ingredients of the endstate. Habitual compliance by the FWFs towards peace required key RFCT activities to ensue.

It was the conduct of key activities performed by the RFCT that accomplished the desired endstate. The means to conduct the activities required a fundamental change in the make-up of the main effort from primarily maneuver units to CA, CI, and INFO OPS teams. The focus of efforts changed to shaping deeper issues such as the attitudes of the population. Though not called decisive points, the key activities could be considered decisive points, for they became the focus of the command's main efforts towards preserving the FWF's centers of gravity.

The key activities dealt primarily with invigorating the infrastructure of the region. The civil police force, the International Police Task Force, elections, and the effects of refugee influx on hot spots such as Brcko, located at the choke point in the Posavina Corridor, were considered key towards shaping the attitudes of the population in support of a peaceful resolution of the GFAP. All the while, the command considered force protection for all entities to be the RFCT's center of gravity. Decisive to the priority of force protection was the enforcement of the ZOS, the continued verification of weapons locations, bunkers, and minefields. The JMCs and the operations of the CA, CI, and INFO OPS continued to be the means directed at the decisive points.

In addition to the bolstered peaceful conditions of the region, the final proof of success was evident after the creation of the Arizona Market. The market evolved into a hub of economic activity where local vendors and businessmen from both sides of the ZOS met. The local population's usage of the market indicated to many that freedom of movement was possible in certain areas. To the population, this became the greatest sign of a possible future where normal relations could be a reality.

The operational design and use of key activities accomplished the endstate for the RFCT. The forces in the region conducted operations without significant loss of life or equipment. The FWFs and local police continued a peaceful existence and did not outwardly conspire to interdict the enforcement or stability plan. The population was afforded some semblance of freedom of movement to take part in economic activities as seen at the Arizona Market. The successful elections became the next test for the RFCT, before a successful conclusion of IFOR.

Phase 3-Elections

You just observe. And where you can make an effective move, you make a move.⁵⁶

After nearly accomplishing the military type objectives associated with the GFAP, U.S. IFOR commanders were pressed to expand the focus of their unit's operations to include another non-military tasks, supporting the up-coming elections. Sitting astride the ZOS and keeping the peace was working but little had been accomplished to ensure the long-term stability and peace of the area.⁵⁷ The civil authorities, to include UNHCR and UNIPTF (United Nations International Police Task Force), were to have begun conducting necessary civil-operations in support of the enduring stability to include elections. The civil authorities continued to lag with regard to their own deployment into the region. Supporting the return of refugees, rebuilding the infrastructure of the country, electing a new government, and beginning the free trade inside and outside the country were already daunting tasks for TF EAGLE. By adding the task of supporting elections, commanders were forced to reconsider the operational design in order to determine whether new decisive points were necessary.

In support of elections, operations orders from the ARRC, TF EAGLE, and the RFCT continued to lack vernacular outright specifying decisive points, but more emphasis on main efforts and centers of gravity were evident. In light of unstated DPs, this section continues the trend seen in the previous section, by identifying the stated main efforts represented by the commander's mission and intent statements, to illuminate possible decisive points. The mission and intent statements of the operations orders in support of elections reflected a changing focus and represented commanders' continued need to address previous military tasks in support of GFAP. Commanders, in their attempts to direct the efforts of their commands, faced the challenge of determining the relevancy of existing centers of gravity or determining new centers of gravity. Main efforts were revised and directed in such a manner as to affect centers of gravity by addressing certain points commanders felt as overly important. The mission and intent statements changed in accordance with changes in centers of gravity and decisive points, but the primary direction of focus or efforts remained similar to previous operations. This indicated reluctance at levels above the RFCT, to focus efforts at non-doctrinal decisive points.

Facing the elections, the COMARRC redirected efforts of the field commanders along two directions of attack. The ARRC commander issued orders to units in his command "to continue to implement the military tasks of the Peace Agreement . . . ; he is to assist the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) in organizing and synchronizing all the functions required for a successful election and support, within capabilities, civilian agencies and the High Representative in order to complete the transition to peace successfully."⁵⁸ The COMARRC failed to provide any written guidance or any indication of an identified center of gravity, decisive points, or main

effort when he addressed the continued focus on the military type tasks. The other direction of operations encompassed the elections. Those writing the operations orders addressing the elections did attempt to be more descriptive in terms of operational design and provided the first hint towards the level of efforts to be used in achieving objectives that may lead to an ends.

The operation order provided by the ARRC denoted a main effort, priorities, and an endstate. The COMARRC, speaking about the elections to his subordinates, gave his intent specifically clarifying the main effort.

I remind you that the Corps Main Effort is assistance of the OSCE in the conduct of successful elections. I consider this crucial to the success of IFOR and therefore wish to focus the activities of the Corps on this aspect of the campaign. I wish this to be reflected at MND (Multi-national Division) level, but I still wish you to retain the provisions of a military secure environment as this contributes to the election process and enable us to progress to our End State.⁵⁹

The COMARRC deemed the elections to be the most important task at hand for IFOR.

Similar to previous orders directing the entry operations of forces into B-H, the operations order did not specify centers of gravity, decisive points, or main efforts. Only certain key areas and the necessity of force protection were given as priorities. The COMARRC identified a main effort in terms of assistance to the OSCE, and listed a criterion necessary for achieving success. According to the COMARRC, long-term success depended on how well OSCE managed the elections as a result of the support given by IFOR. By definition, being the main effort and crucial to the overall success of the entire operation, the assistance to OSCE can be considered a DP for the ARRC. The support rendered to the elections became the overarching objective for subordinate commands as well.

Unlike its higher headquarters, TF EAGLE's operations order, in support of the elections, provided little indication as to a change in operational design. Task Force EAGLE did not mention a center of gravity, but did give a priority of effort, which was support to OSCE. Decisive points continued to remain unwritten, although new priorities and main efforts were identified. The new direction of priorities and main efforts clearly provided a directed focus for the subordinate commanders.

The operational design taken directly from the order considered directions or ways to achieve ends. A peaceful B-H and the redeployment of U.S forces following the successful occurrence of elections were the written ends. Support provided to OSCE was considered critical and successful implementation of the security mission would achieve the ends. Successful implementation required a number of prioritized tasks to be accomplished by the subordinate commanders.

Task Force EAGLE commander listed his priorities of efforts that would accomplish the objective of a secure elections and subsequent ends. Four priorities were given in his intent statement in addition to priorities that continued to focus efforts towards "continuing to implement the military aspects of the Peace Agreement."⁶⁰ The leading priority was to force protection. The commander believed force protection to be the ultimate test of success, for it provided all non-U.S. forces in the region an indication of the strength of the Implementation Force. The second priority, considered key to the elections, was the security IFOR provided to OSCE, other non-military organizations, and civilians who all played important roles in the conduct of the elections. The last two priorities were logistical and communications support for OSCE. To TF EAGLE, the security surrounding the elections was the point of focus in achieving the secondary

objective, the security of the first free elections to be held in B-H since fighting began a half decade earlier. Force protection was key for all commands, but the security IFOR provided to OSCE and the vigilance on non-military organizations, including local police and political entities, was the outstanding proactive task given to the main effort.

According to Fontenot, the RFCT was the assigned tactical main effort that focused efforts on the specific tasks given by TF EAGLE, involving the provision of security for the elections. Task Force EAGLE gave the RFCT five methods of achieving the priority of security and each one became essential in the RFCT's operations order. The first task was to ensure that a "military presence at areas where problems are anticipated" was established.⁶¹ The second task was to provide "highly mobile and responsive Quick Reaction Forces (QRFs)," to react to any possible situations that could jeopardize the elections.⁶² The third task was to dismantle illegal checkpoints set up by the FWF. The fourth task was to assist the UNHCR in returning displaced persons to their homes. The last task was to assist any other non-military organizations that were also assisting in the conduct of the elections. The primacy of efforts towards the above tasks alone required the RFCT to make the following assumption in their order, that the "RFCT's ability to enforce the aspects of GFAP will be impacted by election support related tasks."⁶³

The staff of the RFCT conducted its own mission analysis and identified an operational design that would support its actions in the final phases of Joint Endeavor. Deep within the RFCT operations order for election, the center of gravity for elements posing the greatest threat to successful elections was written. It reads:

The political, military and security force leaders responsible for the conduct of the election are the Center of Gravity for the election. Only they have the capabilities of organizing and supporting mass movements across the IEBL (Inter-entity Boundary Line) and deliberate actions preventing that movement. Planned,

deliberate acts of violence will not occur without the knowledge of local civilian and military leaders. Their ability to spread information, provide logistical support and organize large numbers of individuals make them the key to the possible escalation of ethnic tensions within the 1BCT AOR. RFCT election preparation activities must key on these local leaders to identify planned cross-IEBL movement or violence.⁶⁴

The center of gravity for the brigade's operational design was believed to be individuals who could either negatively or positively affect the progress of the elections.

Task Force EAGLE did not emphasize the need to focus on leaders of the civil, military, or political entities in B-H, but at the operational level, the ARRC did indicate a possible operational level decisive point. The intent of the ARRC clearly demonstrates the emphasis placed on particular leaders.

Obviously there will be many agencies and organizations involved in the process, but the civil police and their political masters hold the key. In the event of an incident, our first thought must be how we can involve them and how we can force them to act as we would wish. This increasing pressure should persuade them to perform their duties in an increasingly satisfactory manner. We must be prepared to support the efforts of IPTF in a robust and vigorous manner should this be necessary.⁶⁵

Those persons who held the key to local civility were considered decisive to the ARRC. Leaders became the decisive point for the ARRC, and leaders in turn became the center of gravity for the RFCT.

The RFCT identified essential ways of addressing leaders in its area of operations and focused the ways with a strengthened means or main effort. The ways, as listed in the RFCT's commander's intent, were: continued emphasis on JMCs, CMSs, and cross-IEBL visits. The commander continued to conduct the JMCs. The cross IEBL visits provided the necessary movement of civilians to polling stations. A main effort was established as the means of furthering security.⁶⁶

Task Force 3-5 Infantry became the main effort for the RFCT and was given tasks directing its focus towards likely hot spots in the area considered most prone to violence since the deployment of U.S. forces into B-H. The RFCT continued to believe that Brcko and its surrounding areas were where the major emphasis of operational focus was needed. Task Force 3-5 Infantry was responsible for patrolling the area to ensure that cross-IEBL voter traffic moved unimpeded, and security and assistance to OSCE was provided. Specific hot spots within the vicinity of Brcko were considered key.⁶⁷

There was a direct correlation between hot spots in Brcko and the leadership of FWF's, local police, and politicians that the ARRC stressed as key. The intelligence annex of the RFCT's operation order reads, "The Brcko City Hall (CQ271718), VRS Special Police HQ (CQ272714), and the 1st/3rd Posavina HQ's (CQ262702) are Serbian locations for key civilian and military leaders responsible for the security of the election. Kings Tavern, Brcko (CQ200667) has been the primary gathering point for Muslim-organized crossing of the IEBL."⁶⁸ With continuous patrols in these areas where leaders who could influence the security of the elections worked, the RFCT successfully maintained a deterring presence that proved highly effective.

Though little emphasis was placed on identifying an operational design in the operations orders of the U.S. tactical units operating in B-H, many of the necessary ingredients making up the operational design were available to help the leaders determine decisive points and where to focus efforts. The ARRC focused its subordinate units on what it considered key-the leadership of organizational entities that could influence the elections. Task Force EAGLE's main priority was the assistance of OSCE by means of securing the area from threats initiated by non-military organizations such as local police

and leaders who could influence local uprisings. The RFCT gave its main effort the task of providing a deterring force in hot spots specifically where the headquarters of non-military organizations and leaders resided or worked. The decisive points identified indirectly throughout all orders were directly related to local leadership and the majority of effort was in turn applied towards deterring undesirable actions on their part.

After the peaceful conduct of the September 1996 elections, IFOR successfully completed its mission. However, it became clear that much remained to be accomplished on the civil side and that the political environment would continue to be potentially unstable and insecure.⁶⁹

Phase 4-Stability

If Uncle Sam's enemies hope to succeed, they expand their means of war. A hostile element can use engagements and stage events to beat the Americans in their own living rooms, via the good offices of the Cable News Network and its fellows.⁷⁰

When the mission for U.S. forces in B-H changed from IFOR to SFOR the units and the objectives changed. The change in objectives caused the ingredients of the operational design in B-H to change in some areas and evolve in others. As tactical commanders spent more time close to the problems of the region, they took advantage of their perspective to evolve their rendition of the operational design. The ways tactical commanders approached the evolution of operational design directly affected the nature of the decisive points at the tactical level. For the first time in B-H, U.S. commanders outwardly used the term decisive points in their orders to their forces.⁷¹

Tactical commanders realized that the previously-stated endstate was much farther away from being obtained than originally thought. The time it would take to stabilize the hate-filled communities on either side of the ZOS and afford a final departure of U.S. forces could not be predicted. To move closer to a possible endstate at a more rapid pace

required a different mindset. Enough forces were still in country to quell possible infractions of the peace but the forces had been for the most part in a reactive mindset focusing on safeguarding advances in peace by use of reactionary forces. A new approach to the overall design was necessary to forestall occurrences of violence before they happened.

The differences in type of objectives given the U.S. Army commanders contributed to a change in mindset. The objectives given to commanders in the field were very different from objectives normally seen on a battlefield, but not unlikely at the conclusion of hostilities. SFOR's primary mission was to consolidate peace and contribute to a secure environment.⁷² Prevention became regarded as a better solution than deterrence. Commanders searched to find the right means to use in order to promote a more peaceful climate with the use of their own means and civilian organizations that would be more preventive in nature.

One tactical commander, like that of Colonel Fontenot of the RFCT and IFOR, felt the need to reexamine the operational design in order to determine decisive points and focus his unit's attention on more preventive measures. Then - Lieutenant Colonel Robin Swan, commander of the 1-26 Infantry Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, wrote a concept paper that his and other units used to set the groundwork for directing actions against decisive points. The paper was entitled *Clausewitz, Jomini, and Resettlement*. Swan, in framing the problem, wrote that the overall strategic aim was the "implementation of internationally recognized procedures for the return of refugees and the associated country-wide freedom of movement guaranteed in the GFAP."⁷³ The methods identified in the concept paper were eventually accepted and translated into tasks to units.

In determining the center of gravity of the threat to resettlement, the most important ingredient of the operational design, Swan significantly deviated from earlier tactical commanders deployed to B-H. He did not agree that the FWFs were the center of gravity. He wrote "The FWFs lost the ability to mass combat power in time and space to achieve operational aims." The objectives of IFOR and the deterrence objectives of SFOR had successfully ensured the FWF could not generate a center of gravity. He asked himself the question, "what did the factions have that we could get a positional advantage over?"⁷⁴ He maintained that the discovered advantage should be in line with the Dayton Accord and establish long-term stability. In Swan's estimation, the answer dealt with time, space, and possibly people. Time and space were equal with relation to the means of U.S. tactical commanders and the FWFs, but people tied to a faction's purpose created an intriguing problem.⁷⁵ The massing of people or non-combatants could present a significant threat to stability, the strategic aim.

Swan wrote in his concept paper that "the Federation can generate a new and difficult-to-deal-with operational center of gravity: the ability to mass civilian activities in time and space to achieve strategic aims."⁷⁶ In Swan's concept paper, only two significant entities within his area of operations could threaten the strategic aims of IFOR, but only one entity could generate an operational center of gravity. The two entities were the Federation and the Republic of Srpska, each on either side of the ZOS. The Federation, over the Republic of Srpska, had the human and monetary resources necessary to create a center of gravity. The strategic aim of the Federation was to "establish a Muslim-dominated central government presiding over a multi-ethnic population." The Federation was attempting to repopulate the ZOS in an attempt to deny the IEHL as a political

boundary. To do this it staged riots and used human shields to threaten returning Serbians. The Serbians did not have the people to use as a countermeasure, but had paramilitary and local police who could be used on a tactical level to threaten the Federation's massing of people. To Swan, the Serbs' resources did not result in a center of gravity, and therefore it was against the Federation's operational center of gravity that Swan focused his tactical unit's attention.

To attack the Federation's center of gravity, Lieutenant Colonel Swan identified nested decisive points. To him, decisive points were leverage points to get at a center of gravity.⁷⁷ To Swan, the decisive points were nested in such a way that they all affected one another. He listed five categories of decisive points towards which he would simultaneously apply power. The categories were: International Agencies, Political Leaders, International Relief Agencies, Republic Srpska Police, finally Entity Military Leaders and Formations. Power would have to be applied in an "even-handed and synchronized manner."⁷⁸

All the decisive points oriented on identifying refugee movements and resettlement patterns, in turn facilitating the implementation of the civil provisions of the GFAP. The first decisive point of dealing with International Agencies such as the UNHCR, OHR and OSCE needed to be addressed first. This decisive point laid the foundation for how refugees would be returned. The second decisive point was the political leaders and would be affected by informing them about how the resettlement was to take place. By convincing the leaders to accept the coordinated procedures, Swan edged the leaders towards taking responsibility for the freedom of movement of refugees. The third decisive point dealt with coordinating the activities and support of the International Relief

Agencies in B-H. Convincing the Republika Srpska Police to accept freedom of movement and ensure safety of returning refugees was the fourth decisive point. The fifth decisive point was the continuation of the enforcement of the military provisions of the GFAP. Individually each decisive point could have affected refugee movement somewhat, but only collectively could they have created a center of gravity forestalling refugee movement with decisive results.

It was clear that the decisive points chosen for the operation had an effect on the threat's center of gravity. After Lieutenant Colonel Swan's unit began applying power against the five mutually supporting decisive points, their need to react to or against a violent action as a result of massing civilian activities in B-H diminished almost completely overnight. The constant pressure applied to the identified decisive points created an environment for Swan's unit that allowed it to focus on creating an environment that supported peace as opposed to simply maintaining the status quo.

One measure of success indicating a better environment for the people of B-H, identified in the region during Swan's tenure, came in the form of positive economic change. A market called the Virginia Market, like that of the Arizona Market, began operating. The market attracted large crowds weekly. Large meetings involving businessmen from both sides of the ZOS came into being. At these meetings, businessmen signed contracts furthering trade between the opposing entities. The tactical commanders and their units of SFOR were successful towards the promotion of stability in the region. The increased stability was a direct result of U.S. forces simultaneously applying maximum efforts including maneuver and non-maneuver forces against clearly identified decisive points.

Analysis

In general, many of the identified decisive points used in the SASO environment of B-H had distinct similarities to the U.S. Army's doctrinal definition of decisive points, but others appear to deviate outside the definition. Tactical commanders' understanding of decisive points, knowledge of the situation, time, and objectives appear to have had a great impact on the characteristics of decisive point in the SASO environment of B-H. Tactical commanders directly and indirectly used decisive points and, whether identified by the author or identified by the tactical commanders in their operations orders, campaign plans, or concept papers, had a place in the operational design. The effect commanders had on the most significant part of the operational design, centers of gravity, ultimately determined the usefulness of the decisive points.

Commanders ultimately determined the utility of decisive points within their area of operations by means of their own preconceived ideas of what actually constituted a decisive point. Commanders radically differed on their impression of what the decisive points were either by definition or by ability to effect. To some, like Colonel Fontenot, decisive points were events occurring in time that had a decisive negative effect on the shape of the environment. They appeared to be possible events to be avoided, such as a casualty or an unfortunate accident suffered by a non-combatant. To other commanders, such as Lieutenant Colonel Swan, decisive points appeared to be a part of the overall system that could be proactively affected to have a positive shaping effect on the overall environment. Both types of decisive points had utility, depending on the commander's understanding of the environment. At the time of the commander's initial entry into

theater, the operational design of the region was a mystery, and commanders focused their forces on the type of decisive points Colonel Fontenot characterized. When commanders created a heightened understanding of their environment, by analyzing the systems affecting the operational design, they had a greater potential to focus their forces more directly towards the complex objectives inherent in SASO. The following chart (Figure 1) contains the identified decisive points by phase and the centers of gravity they were intended to leverage.

DECISIVE POINTS	CENTERS of GRAVITY
Phase 1: ENTRY	
Force Protection of U.S. Forces Legitimacy Crunch Point-Brcko & Posavina Corridor FWF's Participation	No Centers of Gravity identified
Phase 2: TRANSITION TO STABILITY	
Local Police Forces International Police Task Force Elections Hot Spots-Refugee Movement Choke Points Attitude of the Population	FWF's perception of the impact of the implementation measures conducted by IFOR.
Phase 3: ELECTIONS	
Leaders (political, police, FWFs) Hot Spots-Voter movement choke points Force Protection of all Entities	The influence leaders had over the population.
Phase 4: STABILITY	
International Agencies Political Leaders International Relief Agencies Republika Srpska Police Entity Military Leaders and Formations	The ability to mass civilian activities in support of forcing Entity objectives.

Figure 1 Decisive points and centers of gravity by phase.

As U.S. tactical commanders spent more time in B-H attempting to affect the environment, decisive points increased in tangibility, which affected the degree to which they could be actively pursued by use of military force. Commanders actively pursued

operations directed at decisive points when they had clearly identified the centers of gravity. The centers of gravity also changed over the course of the operations, as commanders understood more clearly the operational design of the environment. The center of gravity for those forces in the region that could have threatened IFOR and SFOR evolved over time. Initially, the entry forces did not determine a center of gravity for the threat but did concern themselves with a friendly center of gravity. The friendly center of gravity was the national and international perception of IFOR success. The commanders determined that the international community defined success as limited friendly casualties. Subsequently, in the initial phase, all decisive points related to safeguarding the friendly forces.

A center of gravity for the threat was eventually determined in the Transition to Stability Phase changing the nature of the decisive points. The decisive points took on more proactive characteristic and focused on the perception the FWFs had of the IFOR implementation measures. The JMCs and other coordination measures used by the RFCT became the overarching method to attack the decisive points. It was apparent that the perceptions of those attending the JMCs were critical to the stability of the environment, and this point is illuminated in later phases.

In the Election and Stability Phases, the center of gravity evolved to leaders and the actions of their organizations to affect massed demonstrations. The decisive points evolved as well to actual organizations that played important roles within the complex system that IFOR and SFOR was attempting to stabilize. In both phases, the decisive points were proactively engaged with successful effects on the identified centers of gravity.

In the last phase, the characteristics of all the decisive points more closely resembled the U.S. Army's doctrinal definition of decisive points, while the earlier phases contained identified decisive points that fell into a broader definition. The doctrinal definition states that decisive points are: points on the ground or physical elements such as formations, command posts, and communication nodes; a time or location where the enemy weakness is positioned allowing overwhelming combat power to be generated against it; and a point of potential decision when overwhelming combat power can be applied. All the decisive points in the last phase are physical elements that could be attacked with overwhelming efforts to reach potential decisions that were in line with the objectives of the U.S. forces.

Some of the decisive points identified in the earlier phases of the operations in B-H, such as force protection, legitimacy, attitudes, and participation did not fit into the U.S. Army's doctrinal definition of decisive points. They were not points in a physical sense and it is difficult to justify how overwhelming combat power could have directly attacked them. They were obviously important shaping qualities of the environment and it was easy to see how commanders considered them as potentially decisive towards leveraging the centers of gravity. The intangible decisive points identified by the commanders indicate that the definition of decisive points was too narrow in its relation to time. Shaping operations are by definition continuous in nature and there may be portions of shaping operations that are in fact decisive, connoting the possibility of decisive points outside of the doctrinal definition.

V. Conclusion

On a more general level, a paramount lesson we derive from the Balkan experience is the incredible complexity of military operations. Every decision, every act, every event reverberates with tactical, operational, strategic, and even political implications. The military commander must attend to all four. No matter how small or insignificant an event may seem in the traditional military sense, the commander will discover that in today's security milieu that minor event may suddenly become the object of consuming interest at the highest councils of state.⁷⁹

Decisive points, as characterized by U.S. Army doctrine, are applicable to the problems facing tactical commanders involved in Stability and Support Operations. Tactical commanders operating in the SASO environment of B-H demonstrated that the doctrinal definition of decisive point, in conjunction with the doctrinal characterization of decisive points within the operational design, supported their actions towards achieving their ultimate objectives. In some instances, the strict doctrinal definition of decisive points appeared limiting. Fortunately, the tactical commanders in B-H understood that their tactical decisions had the potential of bringing about operational and strategic outcomes and therefore pursued the elusive SASO decisive point by indirect means. Using operational art to unveil the Clausewitzian fog by use of intellectual activity, U.S. tactical commanders evolved an operational design and subsequent decisive points that had telling positive effects.

Ultimately, commanders focused their unit's main efforts at points that they believed if affected in certain ways would leverage the center of gravity that they had identified for the threat. In many instances, the characteristics of the decisive points did not match the descriptions of decisive points in field manuals, *FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics* nor *FM 100-5, Operations*.⁸⁰ The use of identified decisive points did provide the commanders an influence over the threat to ensure continued operational freedom of

maneuver in the region, which is the purpose of the decisive point.⁸¹ *FM 100-5, Operations*, states, "Securing decisive points can give the operational commander the flexibility to select from more than one line of operation for further advance," but this monograph shows that in SASO, the same benefit enjoyed by the operational commander can be directly provided by the actions of the tactical commander.⁸²

Unfortunately, U.S. Army tactical doctrine provides few insights towards the determination of decisive points compared to that of operational doctrine. U.S. Army operational doctrine provides some characterizations of decisive points but fails to address the breadth of possible forms decisive points can take in SASO. Tactical commanders operating in B-H discovered that decisive points not only existed at one point in time but oftentimes were long-lasting. The long-lived decisive points evolved as perceptions or attitudes changed, but still maintained their decisive characteristics. With long-lasting decisive points, commanders discovered it was best to attack them with overwhelming combat effects versus overwhelming combat power. The effects were creative versus destructive in nature seemingly falling into the realm of simply shaping rather than the realm of overtly decisive. Yet, tactical commanders stated that it was decisive to operate in a SASO environment that had been shaped to allow friendly freedom of maneuver at all points in time.

It is clear that the knowledge tactical commanders possess of operational art to determine the operational design contributes to their ability to be more proactive as opposed to reactive. It is in the Theater and Operational Planning portion of *FM 100-5, Operations*, that operational design is discussed. Unfortunately, there is little indication in U.S. Army doctrine that tactical commanders should conduct campaign planning

which is usually a part of theater and operational planning. If in SASO, tactical commanders are closer to the entities determining the operational design, and have the means to make decisions on a daily basis having operational or strategic implications, they should be provided more guidance in tactical doctrine to determine the operational design. The quicker that tactical commanders, operating in the SASO environment, exercise their ability to determine the operational design, the sooner they identify the decisive points ensuring their freedom of maneuver.

Tactical commanders operating in SASO environments have proven that decisive points are important, and this monograph has shown that an understanding of decisive points as described in both tactical and operational doctrine is necessary. Tactical doctrine provides the definition of decisive points and urges commanders to use them, but operational doctrine provides the necessary insight for their use. Some commanders who operated in B-H for six to twelve months struggled to determine leverage points or decisive points, and subsequently their ability to be more proactive suffered. This may have been a result in their failure to grasp the full scope of U.S. Army operational doctrine as it relates to operational art, operational design, and the decisive point.

The tactical commanders operating in B-H, who had studied extensively the facets of operational art and understood the necessity of operational design, found determining the operational design and subsequent decisive points no easy task. The complex environment of the SASO environment caused them to struggle for at least four to six months before they could understand the scope of the problem well enough to translate an identified operational design into a campaign plan or series of synchronized operations. Other commanders who possessed great tactical skill never felt the same degree of

comfort and clung to disjointed reactions with limited results. The U.S. Army would do well to train tactical commanders who have the potential to serve in a SASO environment in ways to use operational art to discover the operational design and determine the decisive points. This should occur especially if the tactical decision making tool, MDMP, continues to require tactical commanders to identify the decisive points.

Endnotes

- ¹ Gary Klein, Sources of Power, (The MIT Press, 1998), 111.
- ² Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 105-1, Staff Organization and Operations, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1997), 5-12.
- ³ Russell Weigley, The American Way of War, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University press, 1973), 210-12; Carl von Clausewitz, On War, J.J. Graham trans. Vol. 1 (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1986), 26.
- ⁴ Gordon R. Sullivan, MG USA, "From the Deputy Commandant," Military Review, (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS., January 1988), 1-3.
- ⁵ Department of the Army, FM 100-5, Operations, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 6-2.
- ⁶ Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 96.
- ⁷ Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 6-7.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ibid., 5-6.
- ¹⁰ Department of the Army, Joint Publication 3.0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, (Washington, DC: Joint Staff (J-7), February 1995) III-28.
- ¹¹ Wray R. Johnson, LTC USAF, "Warriors Without a War: Defending OOTW," Military Review, (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS., Vol. LXXVIII-December 1998/January-February 1999, No. 6), 71. Rick Atkinson, "Warriors Without A War, U.S. Peacekeepers in Bosnia Adjusting to New Tasks: Arbitration, Bluff, Restraint," The Washington Post, 14 April 1996, A-1. In this same article, Colonel Gregory Fontenot, commander, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division is quoted as saying "This is a strange mission... They didn't train me for this." Nash said, "It ain't natural; it ain't intuitive. They don't teach this stuff at Fort Leavenworth... It's an inner ear problem. No one feels completely balanced."
- ¹² James J. Schneider, Ph.D., How War Works: The Origins, Nature, and Purpose of Military Theory, (Command General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS., 16 June 1995), 2.

¹³ Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 204.

¹⁴ Antoine Henri Jomini, The Art of War, ed. J.D. Hittle, Book 2, Roots of Strategy. (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987), 498.

¹⁵ Ibid., 460.

¹⁶ Ibid., 460.

¹⁷ Ibid., 460.

¹⁸ Ibid., 461.

¹⁹ Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 204.

²⁰ Ibid., 241-242.

²¹ Ibid., 586.

²² Ibid., 585.

²³ Antoine Henri Jomini, The Art of War, ed. J.D. Hittle, Book 2, Roots of Strategy. (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987), 492.

²⁴ Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 227.

²⁵ Mathew Cooper, The German Army 1933-1945, (Scarborough House Publishers, Chelsea, MI. 1978), 132. Moltke had a firm understanding of the changing conditions of war over time. "However, von Moltke was careful not to transform his ideas about warfare into a rigid doctrine. For him the art of war lay in a combination of calculation and daring, each new conflict bringing with it new circumstances that invalidated any attempt to impose on it strict, preordained strategic principles. In his words: 'Strategy is a system of ad hoc expedients; it is more than knowledge, it is the application of knowledge to practical life, the development of an original idea in accordance with continually changing circumstances. It is the art of action, under the pressure of the most difficult conditions.'" Edward Mead Earle, Makers of Modern Strategy, (London, 1948), 180.

²⁶ Department of the Army, FM 101-5, Staff Organization and Operations, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1997), 5-1.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 5-12.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Department of the Army, FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1997), 1-45.

³¹ Martin Van Creveld, Command in War, (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1985), 268.

³² Robin P. Swan, COL USA, interview by Author, tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS., 15 October 1999.

³³ "History of the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina of SFOR," LANDCENT Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/sfor/docu/d981116a.htm>, accessed 1 Oct 99.

³⁴ Stanley F. Cherrie, BG USA, "Task Force Eagle," Military Review, (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.VOL LXXVII, No. 4 –July-August 1997), 63.

³⁵ Antoine Henri Jomini, The Art of War, ed. J.D. Hittle, Book 2, Roots of Strategy, (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987), 461.

³⁶ Stanley F. Cherrie, BG USA, "Task Force Eagle," Military Review, (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.VOL LXXVII, No. 4 –July-August 1997), 63.

³⁷ RFCT OPORD 96-009 (READY ENDEAVOR) (RIVER CROSSING), HEADQUARTERS, RFCT Kirchgoens, GE. MA74591607, 0800 December 95, 7.

³⁸ RFCT OPORD 96-009 (READY ENDEAVOR), Headquarters, RFCT. Kirchgoens, GE. MA745916, 12 1200 B December 95, 2. ARRC Mission. On order, COMARRC is to assume command of the AO of B-H and complete the military tasks associated with the UN/NAC authorized peace agreement. He is to be prepared to control and secure the withdrawal of UN peace forces not transferred to the IFOR including, if necessary, the emergency withdrawal of UNCRO forces.
COMARRC'S Intent. All tactical operations in B-H must be **sensitive to political, strategic, and operational level guidance and factors**. Seize the initiative over the factions from the moment NATO assumes command.

Initial force will simultaneously deployed to key areas within B-H and capable of immediately carrying out military tasks in support of the agreement backed up by the rapid deployment of main forces. Initial shaping operations will use PSYOPS and Media, G2, SOF, Liaison and Coordination Elements (LCE), Liaison and Planning Teams (LPTs), Joint Commissions (JCs), CIMIC, to include MCOs, observers, JCOs and other Enabling Forces to carry out the corps Information Campaign. Priority throughout the operation is **force protection** relying initially on air power. I intend to withdraw non-IFOR UN units as easily as possible. IFOR operations will use robust force against any non compliant faction, as necessary. The End State is the successful hand over to the appropriate and competent civilian organizations which will continue to implement the peace agreement. (Highlighted portions added)

³⁹ Ibid., 3. TF EAGLE Mission. On order, TF EAGLE deploys to AOR TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina and conducts peace enforcement operations to implement the military provisions of the Peace Accord; ensures force protection.

⁴⁰ Ibid.,
COMEAGLE's Intent.

(1) (U) Purpose. The purpose of this operation is to establish and maintain conditions in our Area of Responsibility that contribute to peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

(2) (U) Method. The soldiers and units of TASK FORCE EAGLE will **display at all times the characteristics of a tough, disciplined, competent, and professional military force**. Our deployment, entry, and combined arms operations will demonstrate our capability and determination to be successful. Key will be the establishment and maintenance of **Joint Military Commissions** and civil-military affairs teams at Division, brigade, and battalion levels. Additionally, our initial and subsequent **contacts with the representatives of the former warring factions**, as well as **UN/NGO agencies**, will set the conditions for our long-term success. Our implied task for the conduct of all operations is to facilitate non-military efforts toward infrastructure development, economic growth, and democratic practices. We will treat all people with dignity and respect, but with a firmness of purpose as well. We will ensure: freedom of movement in the AOR; that former-warring factions are separated; the zone of separation is established, marked and enforced; and the terms of the Peace Accord are implemented. We will be prepared, if necessary, to compel the former-warring factions to comply with the Peace Accord. Leaders and soldiers will know and understand our Rules of Engagement. Non-lethal means are preferred, but if force is necessary, strikes will be quick and localized, maximizing the use of precision weapons. All operations will be deliberate, well coordinated, documented, and designed to preserve our forces, with risks assessed and managed. We will reduce the vulnerability to a hostage situation or a small-unit tactical defeat by always operating with platoon or larger formations. Countermining, civil-military and logistical operations are particularly vulnerable - PAY ATTENTION! **Ultimately, we will be judged by our ability to protect our forces in this highly uncertain, difficult and lethal environment.** Therefore, I expect commanders and

leaders to take the required measures to care for, secure, and protect their soldiers and organizations. Judgment on when to use force and when to negotiate will be extremely important. But when troops are threatened or under fire, I expect a quick response in accordance with the Rules of Engagement.

(3) (U) **Endstate.** TASK FORCE EAGLE will have achieved routine and habitual compliance with the terms of the Peace Accord; conducted mission transfer to a new, yet to be defined, peacekeeping organization; and executed a disciplined, safe redeployment. (Highlighted portions added)

⁴¹ Gregory Fontenot, COL USA Ret., interview by Author, tape recording, Leavenworth, KS., 18 October 1999.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Department of the Army, FM 101-5-1 Operational Terms and Graphics, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1997), 1-45.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p 1-95.

⁴⁵ RFCT OPORD 96-009 (READY ENDEAVOR) (RIVER CROSSING), HEADQUARTERS, RFCT Kirchgoens, GE, MA74591607, 0800 DEC95, 7.

⁴⁶ Stanley F. Cherrie, BG USA, "Task Force Eagle," Center of Army Lessons Learned (File room Folder: 1990-1999/1997/VOL LXXVII, No. 4 -July-August 1997), 71.

⁴⁷ TASK FORCE EAGLE OPLAN 95-425 (IRON ENDEAVOR), HEADQUARTERS, TF EAGLE, Bad Kreuznach, GE, 060830BDEC95, 3.

⁴⁸ RFCT OPORD 96-009 (READY ENDEAVOR), Headquarters, RFCT. Kirchgoens, GE. MA745916, 12 1200 B December 95, 6.

RFCT MISSION. **On order, RFCT deploys to AOR TUZLA and conducts peace enforcement** operations to implement the military provisions of the Peace Accord; ensures **force protection**.

3. (U) EXECUTION.

a. (U) Intent.

(1) (U) PURPOSE: Implement the military annex of the Peace Accord and conduct operations to establish and maintain conditions in sector which contribute to peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

(2) (U) METHOD: **RFCT soldiers & units will conduct themselves as tough, disciplined, and competent military professionals.** Initial movement into sector & establishment will set the tone. **Early and effective contacts with former warring factions, local authorities & UN/NGO agencies are critical components to long term success.** We must be perceived by all as **impartial**; accordingly, we will treat all parties & persons with dignity & respect. However, we will be firm & convey a clear sense that

we have a right to be here, a right to do our mission and will not be intimidated. We will conduct operations to mark the ZOS, to verify/assure the separation of forces & support humanitarian assistance operations as directed. If we must use force to protect ourselves or to enforce compliance we will use sufficient force to achieve decisive results. We will apply force with precision in order to minimize collateral damage & the loss of life. To assure **force protection**, we will maintain 100% accountability of all troops & equipment. No one will move without authority and we will conduct operations with platoon sized units. Disciplined alert soldiers using sound judgment are the keys to success in this operation. Stay alert; think and execute with decision. I expect commanders, leaders, and soldiers to share the burden of doing the right thing to care for each other.

(3) (U) ENDSTATE: We will have achieved our mission when routine and habitual compliance with the Peace Accord is the normal condition in our sector; transferred our tasks to follow-on forces and are safely back at home station.
(Highlighted portions were added)

⁴⁹ Gregory Fontenot, COL USA Ret., interview by Author, tape recording, Leavenworth, KS., 18 October 1999.

⁵⁰ Antoine Henri Jomini, The Art of War, ed. J.D. Hittle, Book 2, Roots of Strategy. (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987), 463.

⁵¹ Gregory Fontenot, COL USA Ret., interview by Author, tape recording, Leavenworth, KS., 18 October 1999.

⁵² Ibid., Fontenot said the following when discussing the change in mission type from military to civil activities, "It is my personal opinion that the guys in USEUR who were not running the show during IFOR, remember it was ARRC, Snuffy Smith, didn't get it. They constantly fought us and abused us about doing these non-military tasks. When Crouch (Crouch) became the IFOR commander, he got religion. Because he now realized, what he didn't, I don't think ever understood about us-is that these were essential tasks for us. And, we did them. They weren't in our charter, but we did them."

⁵³ RFCT PEACE OPERATIONS CAMPAIGN PLAN Headquarters, RFCT, Dubrave, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 24 February 1996, 4. The following is the center of gravity as written in the order, "The perception of the Entities that the Peace Agreement and its implementation remains in their overall interests, or at least does not degrade their situation. In particular, for the BiH this equates to territorial integrity of the Bosnian State as a single political entity. (Strategic)"

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁶ Mitchell M. Waldrop, Complexity, (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1992), 463.

⁵⁷ Gregory Fontenot, COL USA Ret., interview by Author, tape recording, Leavenworth, KS., 18 October 1999.

⁵⁸ RFCT OPLAN 96-010 (READY ENDEAVOR II), Headquarters, RFCT, Dubrave, Bosnia-Herzegovina. CQ087656, 15 1600 B July 96, 1.

⁵⁹ RFCT FRAGO #400 (Phase II: Elections [OPLAN Ready Endeavor II]), Headquarters, RFCT, Dubrave, Bosnia-Herzegovina, CQ 087656, 10 1300 B August 96, 3.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 5.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 23.

⁶⁵ RFCT OPLAN 96-010 (READY ENDEAVOR II), Headquarters, RFCT, Dubrave, Bosnia-Herzegovina. CQ087656, 15 1600 B July 96, 2.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 5. The intent of the commander RFCT stated, "Successful elections, as with freedom of movement and respect for the right of return, is a faction responsibility; our role will be in establishing conditions in which the IPTF and the civil authorities can do their duty to accomplish this. We will continue our participation in JMCs, CMSs, and cross-IEBL visits; we will continue to support infrastructure repair, to monitor settlement of displaced persons, and to assist reconstruction efforts, transferring responsibility for these events to OHR, UNHCR, and IPTF.

⁶⁷ RFCT FRAGO #400 (Phase II: Elections [OPLAN Ready Endeavor II]), Headquarters, RFCT, Dubrave, Bosnia-Herzegovina, CQ 087656, 10 1300 B August 96, 9. The main effort for the brigade was TF 3-5. The operation order stated, TF 3-5, "plans and executes mounted/dismounted patrols to monitor activity in sector, established OPTs in potential "hot spots" to monitor and control, if necessary, cross-IEBL voter traffic, and provides election support to OSCE representatives in Opstinas 19 and 19A." Opstinas 19 and 19A were vicinity the town of Brcko. Key locations in the operations order were given that indicated where the police HQ, and local leaders worked or resided.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 21.

⁶⁹ "History of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina," <http://www.nato.int/sfor/docu/d981116a.htm>, accessed 20 November, 1999.

⁷⁰ Daniel P. Bolger, LTC USA, Savage Peace, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1995), 69.

⁷¹ Robin P. Swan, COL USA, interview by Author, tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS., 15 October 1999.

⁷² "History of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina," <http://www.nato.int/sfor/docu/d981116a.htm>, accessed 20 November, 1999. Below are listed the specific tasks given to SFOR. To deter or prevent a resumption of hostilities or new threats to peace. To consolidate IFOR's achievements and promote a climate in which the peace process can continue to move forward. To provide selective support to civilian organizations within its capabilities

⁷³ Robin Swan, LTC USA, Clausewitz, Jomini, and Resettlement. Headquarters Task Force January 97, 1.

⁷⁴ Robin P. Swan, COL USA, interview by Author, tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS., 15 October 1999.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Robin Swan, LTC USA, Clausewitz, Jomini, and Resettlement. Headquarters Task Force January 97, 1.

⁷⁷ Robin P. Swan, COL USA, interview by Author, tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS., 15 October 1999.

⁷⁸ Robin Swan, LTC USA, Clausewitz, Jomini, and Resettlement. Headquarters Task Force January 97, 1.

⁷⁹ Wesley K Clark, GEN USA, "The United States and NATO: The Way Ahead," Parameters, Winter 1999-2000, 2-14.

⁸⁰ Department of the Army, FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1997), 1-45. Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 6-7.

⁸¹ Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 6-7.

⁸² Ibid., 6-8.

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